

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-01 INR-07
L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15
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O R 271153Z APR 77
FM AMEMBASSY ANKARA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 7291
INFO AMEMBASSY ATHENS
AMEMBASSY NICOSIA
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMCONSUL ADANA
AMCONSUL ISTANBUL
AMCONSUL IZMIR
USMISSION NATO
EUCOM

C O N F I D E N T I A L ANKARA 3170

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PINT, TU
SUBJECT: ECEVIT CAMPAIGN BUS ATTACKED

1. THE DOMESTIC VIOLENCE WHICH HAS PLAGUED TURKEY FOR THE LAST TWO YEARS ERUPTED APRIL 26 IN THE ELECTION CAMPAIGN WITH AN ATTACK AGAINST A CAMPAGIN BUS CARRYING REPUBLICAN PEOPLE'S PARTY (RPP) CHAIRMAN BULENT ECEVIT. THE ASSAULT WAS ALLEGEDLY CARRIED OUT BY ACTIVISTS OF THE EXTREME RIGHT WING NATIONALIST ACTION PARTY (NPA). ECEVIT, WHO DURING THE EARLY DAYS OF THE CAMPAIGN HAS MADE THE ISSUE OF INTERNAL SECURITY A THEME OF MUCH OF HIS RHETORIC, WAS ATTACKED IN THE SMALL TOWN OF NIKSAR IN TOKAT PROVINCE IN NORTH CENTRAL ANATOLIA LATE AFTERNOON OF APRIL 26. ACCOUNTS OF WHAT HAPPENED ARE NOT COMPLETE BUT HIS CAMPAIGN BUS WAS APPARENTLY ASSAULTED AT LEAST

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TWICE BY STONES AND REPORTEDLY ON AT LEAST ONE OCCASION, BY GUNFIRE.

2. ECEVIT BEGAN A THREE-DAY SWING THROUGH NORTH CENTRAL ANATOLIA MORNING OF APRIL 26 IN AMASYA PROVINCE. STOPPING AT EVERY TOWN ALONG THE ROAD, HE WAS REPORTEDLY GREETED WARMLY BY HIS SUPPORTERS. HE WAS ALSO CONFRONTED SEVERAL

TIMES BY NON-VIOLENT DEMONSTRATORS FROM BOTH THE EXTREME LEFT AND EXTREME RIGHT. THE VIOLENT INCIDENT OCCURRED NEAR EVENING AS HE ENTERED NIKSAR. THE ROAD WAS BARRICADED AND STONES WERE THROWN AT THE BUS. AFTER ARRIVING IN THE TOWN SQUARE FOR A SCHEDULED SPEECH, ECEVIT'S BUS WAS SUBJECTED TO A BARRAGE OF STONES WHICH WAS BROKEN UP WHEN GOVERNMENT "JANDARMA" FORCES FIRED INTO THE AIR. SHORTLY THEREAFTER ANOTHER ATTACK OCCURRED WHICH ALLEGEDLY INCLUDED GUNFIRE. ALL THE WINDOWS IN ECEVIT'S BUS WERE BROKEN AND HE AND HIS ENTOURAGE IN THE BUS (INCLUDING HIS WIFE) WERE FORCED TO TAKE COVER ON THE FLOOR TO AVOID INJURY. (FOUR PERSONS WERE REPORTEDLY INJURED IN THE EVENT, ALTHOUGH ACCOUNTS ARE NOT CLEAR AS TO WHETHER THESE PEOPLE WERE IN THE BUS.)

3. DESPITE THE VIOLENCE, ECEVIT PROCEEDED WITH HIS SPEECH IN WHICH HE ACCUSED THOSE WHO HAD CARRIED OUT THE ATTACK OF "BEING LACKEYS OF THE BANDITS NOW IN POWER" AND SAID THAT SUCH PERSONS COULD NOT BE CONSIDERED EITHER TURKS OR MOSLEMS. RPP SEC GEN EYUBOGLU SUBSEQUENTLY ISSUED A STATEMENT IN WHICH HE ACCUSED THE JUSTICE PARTY (JP) OF HAVING BEEN INVOLVED IN THE INCIDENT. IN HIS STATEMENT, HE CLAIMED THAT JP MINISTER OF YOUTH AND SPORTS ALI SEVKI EREK, HAD VISITED THE AREA TWO DAYS PRIOR TO ECEVIT'S ARRIVAL AND HAD HELD SECRET MEETINGS WITH NAP OFFICIALS. ACCORDING TO EYUBOGLU, THE PURPOSE OF THE MEETINGS WAS TO ARRANGE FOR THE ATTACK ON ECEVIT.

4. COMMENT: FORTUNATELY, NO SERIOUS INJURIES RESULTED FROM THE ATTACK. REGARDLESS, THE INCIDENT IS THE MOST DRAMATIC
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AND SERIOUS INVOLVING A MAJOR POLITICAL FIGURE IN TURKEY IN RECENT MEMORY. ECEVIT'S BITTER REACTION COULD SPARK A REACTION FROM HIS FOLLOWERS. MOREOVER, THE FACT THAT SUCH AN ATTACK HAS OCCURRED COULD PRODUCE THE PSYCHOLOGICAL SETTING FOR FURTHER SUCH ATTACKS, AND THE SECURITY ARRANGEMENTS FOR POLITICAL RALLIES IN TURKEY ARE NOT RPT NOT VERY EFFECTIVE. THE INCIDENT WILL AGGRAVATE THE ALREADY DEEP DIVISIONS BETWEEN LEFT AND RIGHT IN THE COUNTRY AND WILL HELP INSURE THAT THE ISSUE OF INTERNAL SECURITY REMAINS A DOMINANT CAMPAIGN THEME.
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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01-Jan-1994 12:00:00 am
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: HARASSMENT, PUBLIC DEMONSTRATIONS, POLITICAL LEADERS, ELECTION CANDIDATES, POLITICAL SITUATION, ELECTION CAMPAIGNS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Sent Date: 27-Apr-1977 12:00:00 am
Decaption Date: 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 22 May 2009
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
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Status: NATIVE
Subject: ECEVIT CAMPAIGN BUS ATTACKED
TAGS: PINT, TU, NPA, (ECEVIT, BULENT)
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkgvkey: odbc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/aa63c19c-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Margaret P. Grafeld
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